

THE WILMINGTON JOURNAL.

CONFEDERATE STATES OF AMERICA.

WILMINGTON, N. C., THURSDAY, MARCH 31, 1864.

We are not so frequently asked for news nowadays as we formerly were, for the reason, perhaps, that our paper now gets out quite as soon as we do, sometimes even more than at almost any former time for months past. There is a temporary lull in the storm of war, but the calm which it produces will soon be broken up.

GRANT is very arranging for the opening campaign. He knows that much is expected of him, and that LINCOLN, deprecating his popularity as a candidate for the Presidency, has placed him (GRANT) in such a position as to enable him (LINCOLN) to throw all the blame of any failure upon him. It is then reasonable to suppose that GRANT will not remain long idle, or permit any advantage to escape him. He is now at the crisis of his fate and will do all he can to turn that crisis to his own advantage.

THE MAIL received yesterday brings little news. We try to glean what we can for this article.

First, then, in reference to a matter which engages public attention at this time, we think the following announcement from Mr. MANNING, published in the Richmond papers may be a matter of some considerable interest. It will be seen that it gives one more day for funding, and also states when and how the issue of new currency will commence. We confess that we, like most others, supposed that old currency could be funded in four per cent. bonds up to but not on the first of April. From the following announcement it will be seen that they can be funded on the first of April in the same manner as on preceding days.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT, C. S. A., Richmond, March 31, 1864.

The following instruction is issued for the guidance of all officers of the Treasury Department.

Treasury notes may be received and funded in four per cent. certificates on the first of April in the same manner as on preceding days. The new notes to be issued as currency will be on the first of April, and the issue will be commenced on the 2nd of April, 1864, in making payment of demands upon the Treasury on and after that date.

C. G. MANNING, Secretary of Treasury.

THE *Augusta Chronicle* and *Sentinel* publishes the following despatch:

Richmond, March 31.—Four per cent. certificates and bonds are transferable in the same manner as all other registered stock. See the remarks in the *Richmond Sentinel*, of the 23d inst.

C. G. MANNING, Secretary of Treasury.

ALL our exchanges from the interior of the State speak of the snow storm of last week as very severe. The Greensboro' Patriot says it was terrible in the extreme, for about fifteen long hours, the snow in that time having fallen to a depth of about seven inches. The *Hillsboro' Recorder* says that on Tuesday week it snowed all day, and at night the thermometer fell to 28 degrees. The weather here continues cold, uncomfortable and equinoctial. Night before last it rained, and yesterday the wind howled around in a most melancholy manner, and at intervals the rain fell in torrents.—*Daily Journal*, 30th.

ATTEMPTED HIGHWAY ROBBERY.—An attempt at highway robbery and murder was made upon the person of an old gentleman, Mr. WOODMAN SIDNEY, on Saturday last, while he was on his way from Wilmington to his home on Topsail Sound. It appears that two men in soldiers' uniforms, accosted him in the public road, and demanded his money, which he refused to give up, when the fence struck him several blows on the head with a club, thereby stunning him very severely and rendering him insensible. From some cause the culprits ceased their operations on the old gentleman without getting his money. He was still in his buggy insensible, and when he came to his senses he found that his horse had carried him near to a neighbor's on the sound. He then succeeded in getting home, where his wounds were dressed. Mr. SIDNEY is in a very critical situation, and there is considerable doubt of his recovery. We presume the matter will be fully investigated. We learn Mr. S. can identify the men. Mr. SIDNEY is quite an old and feeble man, and it is a great wonder that he got home after having received at least four blows on his head with a club. The parties engaged in the outrage had first ascertained that he had no weapons. Their leaving him without commencing their purpose is, no doubt, due to their hearing some noise and fearing that some one was coming.

ROBBERY.—Sometime during Monday night, some parties broke into the smokehouse and storeroom attached to the residence of Mrs. T. C. CRAFT, on Princess street, in the Eastern part of town, by digging under it and breaking up the brick pavement. They took all the meat, meal and other provisions, and stole grain and other things stored in the house. We do not know that any clue has been found to the perpetrators of this outrage upon a defenceless widow lady, but trust that there may be.

GENERAL JOHNSON'S REPORT.—We devote a considerable portion of our space in to-day's issue to Gen. JOSEPH E. JOHNSON'S Report of the campaign in Mississippi during last year. It will, no doubt, be read with as much attention as anything else we could lay before our readers. It places Gen. PERRYMAN and his report in a very unfavorable light, while it cannot be pleasing to the friends of Gen. JOHNSON to find that a simple detail of circumstances exonerates him from all blame in connection with the Vicksburg disaster.

The telegraph sometimes makes amusing announcements, as for instance, yesterday when it stated that the war was progressing unfavorably to the Danes. Now, how could it possibly be otherwise, when we recollect that Denmark Proper (leaving out the Duchies, of course) has not more than a million and a half of people, and that she is attacked by the half of Europe, including two of the "Great Powers," Austria and Prussia? It would be a miracle, indeed, if such a war should not progress unfavorably to the Danes. The "leagued oppression" that overbore Poland, was not half so unequal as this so-called war. Indeed, much as has been said about the progress of the present war, it would be difficult to find one in which the doctrine that "might makes right" has met with a more general or more practical acceptance. Of course there is never wanting a plausible excuse, and it makes little difference upon what excuse is based. Russia assisted Austria to crush Hungary in the interests of law and order, and Austria was glad to have Hungary crushed in the interests of her dynastic and bureaucratic "institutions."—Austrian despotism, is the great friend and sympathizer with the despotism of ABRAHAM LINCOLN, and the efforts to crush out the efforts of the Confederates for self-government. But this time, freedom, progress and civilization are the things with which Russia sympathizes! The same Austria which labored to compel, and with that aid Russia did compel the independent people of Hungary to abandon, for the time, at least, their separate and independent nationality, and to remain under the yoke of the Germanic nation of the Danes, and to render them the crown of Denmark under the rule of which they have been longer, and under which also they have enjoyed more freedom and more prosperity than has ever been vouchsafed to Hungary during her connection with Austria.

Who will believe that the same Russia that crushed out freedom in Hungary sympathizes with freedom in America? Who will believe that Austria, which holds the separate nationality of Hungary in chains, really sympathizes with the national or Germanic aspirations of the little Duchies on the Danish peninsula? Few we suppose. We will see that Alexander of Russia recognizes in ABRAHAM LINCOLN of the United States a fellow-despot, and in the efforts of the South the struggles of an older Poland, Poles or Lancers, but he cares nothing about Silesia, Hungary or any other non-Germanic portions of the European dominions. Now does Prussia, where a complex revolution against constitutional ideas has been effected by the Court, care about the vested rights of the Silesians? It is all a struggle for power. It is the bar of nations will submit to what they have done before. Denmark must take what she can get, and be glad that it is so.

worse. If we are crushed, we must take what comes for the world will never sympathize with the defeated party. Thanks to Providence we cannot be overrun as the Danes can be—the smallest of our States exceeds Denmark Proper in area;—North Carolina is over three times as large. The Danish population is also too small to cope with Austria, Prussia and the German Confederation on any terms. The war there is a foregone conclusion before it commences. Virginia herself, divided and impoverished as she appears to be, exceeds Denmark in military resources. And although the Danes are good seamen and have, for their size, a good navy, and the Germans are not bad at sea, the season is unfavorable for naval operations in so high a latitude, so that really Denmark derives little advantage, so far, from her naval superiority.—*Daily Journal*, 30th.

THE YANKEE GOLD BILL.—Our readers will recollect that we, in common with many other papers, have referred to the various jobbing operations by which the Yankee Treasury has so far succeeded, and still hopes to succeed in keeping down the premium upon gold.

A very short time since gold in New York went up to 169, whereupon CHASE at once threw a certain amount of gold into market, with the temporary effect of bringing it down to 160; but hardly had this been done when the temporary effect passed away, and gold commenced rising, until on Friday last it was in New York at 168 1/2, being but a trifle under its very highest point. That point, and over it, has no doubt already been attained, and it cannot be either put down below that or even kept down at that by any such tampering as Secretary CHASE has been carrying on.

Before the first of May gold in New York is in all human probability reaching 170; that is, it will be worth more than it is now. To a country so largely dependent upon foreign commerce, and trying to carry it on, in this little shroud of absolute ruin. When gold has reached 200, a state of things will have been reached at which there is no standing still. Either some backward step must be taken or the forward dash over the precipice of commercial and financial ruin must be looked in the face.

It is true, and we are sorry to say it is true, that Confederate currency and finances have about as bad as they could be, and that now, although improving, they are not so better than they were. It might appear that such a state of affairs would be sufficient to cause commercial and financial ruin impending over the Yankees would apply even more forcibly to ourselves. We admit this, so far as the situations of the Yankees and Confederates are similar, but no farther. For us to attempt to carry on a foreign trade, as the Yankees do, would be impossible. Fortunately for us the same Yankee blockade that prevents our receiving specie or its equivalent for our productions, and thus sustaining our currency, relieves us from the necessity of sustaining foreign commerce, by cutting off foreign commerce. The Yankees are differently situated. They depend upon their commercial and financial power, and when that fails, great, no doubt, will be the result.

More Changes.

The enemy is about trying on a new programme this spring. HALLER, as our readers are aware, has gone under, and GRANT is now the Yankee "man on horse back"—the new Napoleon of their hopes—the Commander-in-Chief of their armies.

MEADE will also go under. That he is, or is to be, succeeded, has already been announced in the Northern papers. Where he is to go, or who is to come in his place, no one seems to know; only this much GRANT has stated himself, namely: that until further orders his headquarters will be with the Army of the Potomac.

For sundry reasons many of our contemporaries wholly disbelieve the Yankee programmes of the war which point to another "on to Richmond" as one of GRANT's leading operations during the coming summer. They contend that GRANT is too shrewd a general to betray his plans, and that if he had seriously contemplated any such movement he would never have let it out.

This may be so and it may not. GRANT might as well let our people would reason precisely as above. That they would give him credit for more sense than to betray his projected movements in advance for our information, and thus assuming, he might suppose that he was no more betraying himself one way than the other. At any rate, more newspaper programmes are not to be accepted as General GRANT's plans, so that after all we can hardly form conclusions from the communicativeness or reticences of the journals.

For our own part, we think there is pretty strong reason for supposing that GRANT aspires to success in a campaign in Virginia. He has lately been flattered enough to fill his mind with the impression that he is bound to succeed where others have failed. He thinks, perhaps, to assemble an overwhelming force to operate against Lee as he did to operate against Vicksburg, and also against BRAGG. He may also look upon a successful blood struggle against Lee's army as likely to exercise a more decisive influence upon the progress of the war than one struck at any other point.

THE EIGHTH DAY OF APRIL, 1864, has been set apart throughout the Confederacy as a day of humiliation and prayer. That day will come on next Friday week.

It is extremely desirable that the Ministers of the different religious denominations in the Confederacy should bear this fact in mind and endeavor to impress it upon the minds of their congregations. The frame of spirit induced by this solemn act may tend to make our people more dependent upon the protection of Providence, more truly willing to make sacrifices for their cause, more disinterested, more generous, more inclined to do as they would be done by. Laying all other considerations aside, who can doubt but that a people acting in this spirit, will be more deserving of the blessing of God than a people acting in a different spirit, or that they will be braver men and better citizens. But the mere observance of the day itself will not be and cannot be productive of the same amount of good that might reasonably be expected to flow from it if contemplated, prepared for and looked forward to for some time previous.

GOLD for the old currency sells in Richmond at 21 for one. This, for the new currency, would be only equivalent to 14 for one. The Richmond Whig thinks that in two weeks gold will not be worth more than 10 for one.

We fear, however, that there will not be a corresponding reduction in the cost of the necessities of life, for the simple reason that in many of these necessities there is an actual scarcity, which would cause prices to rule high in any currency, even were it at par with gold and silver.

This is especially the case with manufactured goods, which cannot be manufactured in the Confederacy in sufficient quantities to meet the demands of the country, while the recent regulations and restrictions placed upon blockade running seem to have had the effect to pretty much cut off the supplies from that source.

We do not think that it was the design either of Congress or of the departments to stop the introduction of goods through the blockade, but whether designed or not, the rules recently put in force appear very likely to effect that object. At least such are the present indications here.

We have received "The Age," a Southern Eclectic Magazine, for February, 1864. The publishers make an apology for the delay in publication, owing to the difficulty in obtaining paper. "The Age" is a very creditable Magazine, under all the circumstances.

We are requested by Dr. G. W. PRESIDENT of the Press Association, to state that the annual meeting of said Association will be held at Augusta, Ga., on the 6th day of next April, and that it is desirable there should be as full a meeting of the Press as possible either in person or by proxy.

Before the Georgia Legislature adjourned on Saturday night week, forty-one of the members protested against the passage of the Stephens resolutions, denying the power of Congress to pass the law suspending the operation of the writ of *habeas corpus*. The protesting members held, and we think correctly, that this was a question for the Courts and not for the Legislature. All questions of construction of laws or constitutional powers come properly before the Judiciary, and not before the Legislative or Executive branches of the Government of Georgia. On the question of constitutional construction, Governor Brown's opinion, or the opinion of the Legislature of Georgia, is but an opinion, and not at all an authority. To decide authoritatively on such subjects pertains to the Judiciary—to the Courts.

The question of the necessity for the suspension of the writ of *habeas corpus* is somewhat doubtful, we confess; and we hardly see that much has been gained by it that could not have been secured without it. We allude chiefly to the uniform enforcement of the act of Congress of last January, putting principals in to service. Circumstances have shown that that might, with all safety, have been left in the hands of the State Courts; as their decisions have, uniformly sustained the law, not even excepting North Carolina, where the opinions of a majority of the Supreme Court are known to be favorable to the law and contrary to the address position of Chief Justice PEARSON, who will thus be overruled.

The act suspending the writ of *habeas corpus*, although not absurd, and indeed hardly useable at all, is nevertheless an unpopular enactment. Whether, in effect, it does interfere with any man's rights or not, it seems to confer the power to do so. The general opinion throughout the Confederacy will no doubt be sufficiently marked to decide the next Congress in the course it will take with reference to this act, and that course will, we think, be adverse to its reenactment. It may be permitted to expire by its own limitation, but will hardly receive any new lease of life.

We question if any probable good derived from the suspension is sufficient to counterbalance the evil which it does by giving an apparently fair and valid ground for capital against the administration and against the Confederacy. Whether it is so or not, it looks like military despotism. It is constitutional, we feel certain, but it implies an exercise of extreme constitution, all powers, which give great concern to the doubtful and offer the best chance of complaint to the dissatisfied. The writ is an old and venerated one, and justly guarded with jealousy by a free people. It is true there may be some grounds of necessity for its suspension, with which neither we nor the people in general are acquainted, but until we are better acquainted with such grounds, or have stronger assurances of their existence, we will be apt to think that if the people do not demand the repeal of the suspension act, they will at least strongly desire it.

The rapid repair of the railroads in Mississippi, destroyed by SHERMAN'S forces, shows two things:—One is that it is easier talking about destroying railroads than it is doing it, and further that our people in the Southwest are not yet shorn of their spirit and energy.

A despatch from Meridian, Miss., published in the *Richmond Enquirer* of Saturday, furnishes information to the effect that the road destroyed by SHERMAN'S force had been repaired in 25 working days, and it was expected that thirty-five additional miles destroyed by General SMITH would be repaired in ten days more.

This is certainly a surprising statement in view of the immense harm which SHERMAN claimed to have inflicted upon the roads, sufficient one would think to have prevented their being put in working order again for six months to come.

EASTER SUNDAY has come and gone. It has made less noise than it once did, though for that matter, so do all celebrations, or at least they seem so to us. The world is getting older perhaps; the individuals and nations certainly do so as individuals, though as an aggregate, we suppose that people will average about the same they used to, since none can advance to middle life or old age without passing through childhood and youth, so that the morning and forenoon of life must continue to bear their wonted proportions to its afternoon and evening.

Lent, which closed with Easter was a perplexing period, since its duration was about coincident with that of the fuss about the new and the old currency, and change was not to be had without much tribulation.

The solemn observances of the Catholic and Episcopal Churches are no doubt still kept up in connection with the season of Lent, but we take it for granted that the abstinance from meats has been but sparingly enforced. Fish could not be had, soldiers could not fast, and people, not soldiers, were generally glad to get either fish or fowl without running much risk of over-indulgence.

The time during which the question of funding will remain an open one is rapidly drawing to a close. He who wakes up on Friday morning, having neglected to make the proper funding arrangements to meet his taxes, will probably wake up feeling somewhat like an "April Fool."

By the way the *Charleston Courier* makes mention of Easter eggs as among the "institutions" still surviving as late as last week. We had forgotten their existence.

It is sincerely to be hoped now that Easter has come and gone—that Lent is over, and funding about "played out"—we may have some weather more favorable for gardens and early vegetables. Every thing looks about as ill as it can do. We do not recollect a more backward season, but perhaps we never paid quite as much attention to the signs of the times in that way.

THE YANKEE GOLD BILL.—This bill, recently passed by both houses of the Yankee Congress, and about which so much has been said, simply authorizes CHASE to dispose, from time to time, of the gold reserve in the U. S. Treasury, for the purpose of keeping down the market price of gold.

This gold reserve arises from gold paid in taxes on imports, etc., at the subtreasuries, and indeed forms the only specie basis of the immense volume of greenbacks which flood the North. It would really seem as though this gold would have a greater effect in sustaining their currency, it retained as a basis for the circulation, than if thrown upon the market in a speculative attempt to keep gold down by trading off the specie basis of the greenbacks. After a while all these make-shifts must fail, and the greenback currency go down and gold go up, all the faster because of the futile and unphilosophical attempts to maintain their equilibrium.

Funding the Currency.

We have already published a synopsis of the Act for funding of Confederate Treasury notes. We do not suppose we will be trespassing upon the patience of our readers by republishing the following. There remain but three days more for funding \$100 bills, and under the new law, at par for 4 per cent. After Thursday next all non-interest bearing notes above \$5 will be subjected to a discount of 33 1/3 per cent. Then comes the funding of \$5's at par, which can be continued until the first of July next, when they will also be subject to the same discount of 33 1/3 per cent. The following is the synopsis alluded to above:—The one hundred dollar non-interest bearing notes are receivable for public dues before April 1, '64, at par; from and after April 1, 1864, not receivable at all. Fundable in 4 per cent. bonds before April 1, 1864, at par. Fundable in 4 per cent. bonds from first to last day of May, exclusive, at 50 per cent. bonds from first to last day of June, exclusive, at 40 per cent. bonds from first to last day of July, exclusive, at 30 per cent. bonds from first to last day of August, exclusive, at 20 per cent. bonds from first to last day of September, exclusive, at 10 per cent. bonds from first to last day of October, exclusive, at 5 per cent. bonds from first to last day of November, exclusive, at 2 1/2 per cent. bonds from first to last day of December, exclusive, at 1 per cent. bonds from first to last day of January, exclusive, at 50 per cent. bonds from first to last day of February, exclusive, at 40 per cent. bonds from first to last day of March, exclusive, at 30 per cent. bonds from first to last day of April, exclusive, at 20 per cent. bonds from first to last day of May, exclusive, at 10 per cent. bonds from first to last day of June, exclusive, at 5 per cent. bonds from first to last day of July, 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